

Dear Los Angeles County Redistricting Commission:

I am a San Gabriel Valley resident and I encourage the Commission to consider keeping the San Gabriel Valley as one Community of Interest, otherwise, it cuts at the heart of the most ethnically diverse region in the country. The San Gabriel Valley (SGV) cities such as Alhambra, Arcadia, Monterey Park, Rosemead, San Gabriel, San Marino, Temple City, Hacienda Heights, Rowland Heights, Walnut, and Diamond Bar share characteristics that make them a SGV Community of Interest (SGV COI).

Dividing the SGV COI creates unnecessary obstacles to continue to foster a symbiotic relationship between the government and its constituents. The SGV community is one of the most ethnically diverse regions in the country that shares common cultural, social, familial, economic, and quality of life interests that should not be divided into separate districts.

The SGV community is a place where children learn, adults work, and seniors gather. Families are bound together by a rich cultural heritage and a sense of duty and traditions that are tirelessly preserved and passed on to the next generation. Along with all these historical, cultural, and familial ties, Asian Americans speak dozens of languages and dialects, reflecting the community's rich immigrant character and diversity. Language remains to be a challenging barrier impacting access to a range of vital services, such as healthcare, social services, housing, courts, and education. It is essential for the citizens in this community to be able to voice their concerns to representatives who would be culturally sensitive to the uniquely diverse needs of the community.

By keeping the SGV COI together, the representative can be our champion for progressive policies to protect and grow the economic development of our diverse community. SGV COI is a community that is uniquely characterized by residential properties, small businesses, excellent schools, state-of-the-art medical centers such as City of Hope (Duarte), libraries, and museums with unique historical collections, devoted cultural and religious centers that serve as important healing and community gathering places. As SGV communities grow, so too have their contributions to SGV, Los Angeles County, and the American economy. Marked by mom-and-pop businesses, employing many workers, and generating significant revenue, SGV has become a gathering place for all who seek out regional authentic Asian cuisines and enjoy its rich culture and traditions. The SGV is where you will see and hear Asian-only languages written and spoken at retail shops, restaurants, and ethnic supermarkets. We believe it makes sense to keep SGV together to maintain the economic and social integrity of this community that enriches life for everyone in the community.

Splitting the SGV COI into separate districts dilutes the SGV community's political voice. The SGV community already faces challenges from becoming citizens, registering to vote, and voicing concerns at the ballot box. As one of the most linguistically isolated communities, SGV's residents rely on community-based organizations for access to resources and to meaningfully participate in government processes. Splitting the SGV dilutes minority voting power and muffles the ability for its residents to voice their concerns.

SGV has been deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of anti-Asian violence even before March 2020. A walk through some of the neighborhood's main thoroughfares reveal this impact as many businesses have been shuttered.

COVID-19 has exacerbated the racially charged tension that many in the communities experienced. The SGV community has been a safe haven for Asian Americans when anti-Asian hate crimes were being perpetuated against them for looking "Chinese." When anti-Asian hate sentiments were pervasive, candlelight vigils were organized across the SGV community by grassroots supporters from the community to express "enough is enough!"

We would like to keep our communities under one district so we can overcome obstacles together and claim victory as one district.